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# MUSIQUE ET INFORMATIQUE: UNE BIBLIOGRAPHIE INDEXEE

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Département Musique, Département Informatique,  
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This bibliography is concerned to document the musical applications of digital computers and aims to be comprehensive. In spite of the criticisms which follow, all serious music libraries should obtain it. It includes references to books, but more often to dissertations or articles, dealing with digital sound synthesis, computer-aided composition, computer-aided analysis, computer-aided music theory and computer-aided musicology. It does not include references to the related area of speech synthesis, which is a pity since the problems of speech synthesis and sound synthesis in general are so interdependent.

As far as I could tell, all sources of significance are included as far as digital sound synthesis goes: I cannot vouch for other areas. (There were a few omissions that I was able to spot, but they were not important in relation to the whole.) What is a little puzzling is the inclusion of sources of little or no significance. Is there any point in including 'Tom Swift and the Electronic Muse' from *High Fidelity/Musical America* or 'Play it again, IBM' by Howard Taubman in *The New York Times*? These are only a couple of several possible examples. Inevitably the questions arise: (1) for whose benefit is such a bibliography intended? (2) how desirable or helpful is it to be comprehensive rather than constructively selective? It isn't for me to answer these questions, but for the compilers. I merely observe that specialists in the field are probably aware of most of the entries which concern them, but should find such a bibliography helpful in tracking down the odd item that has hitherto escaped their attention; they will not find such pointless breadth particularly enlightening. Novices who are intending specialists are likely to find their time wasted in pursuing the journalistic trivia; while those who might care to get acquainted with this exciting field in a general sort of way will be intimidated by the forbiddingly 'heavy' aspect of so many of the serious entries. I do not know whether the compilers have been fully comprehensive with regard to the silly ones.

One might wonder whether the indexing system goes

any way towards countering these grumbles. To some extent it does, in that it enables a reader to sort out, in a rough and ready way, what area or areas an entry will cover by means of four-letter key-words. Here is an example of an entry selected at random

162 BRENDER, Maurita, BRENDER, Ronald F.      DESS  
"COMPUTER TRANSCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS      NOTA  
OF MID-THIRTEENTH CENTURY MUSICAL  
NOTATION." *Journal of Music Theory* 11, 2,  
Winter 1967. 198-221

The key-words for entry No. 162 are DESS and NOTA. On consulting the 'Tables des mots-clés' at the rear of the bibliography, we find that under category 1, 'Type de l'Article', DESS is defined as 'description sommaire' and that under category 3, 'Champs', NOTA is defined as 'notation et/ou transcription'. We then deduce that entry No. 162 is a summary description in the field of notation and/or transcription. In this instance, as in many more, this seems to be overstating the obvious. But we can, of course, work the system the other way round. We could, for instance, look up NOTA in the 'Index des mots-clés' and find listed by entry number all references the compilers consider relevant to the fields covered by NOTA. There are 49 such references to check out in the bibliographical body of the book. If, however, we consult the 'Index des mots-clés' hoping to find listings for DESS, INSO ('information sommaire'), PANO ('panorama') and TECH ('article technique'), we will be disappointed, for they are inexplicably absent.

Another grumble is that, according to the Preface, FORTRAN and ALGOL are not mentioned in the body of the text (in fact, there is a key-word 'FORT' for FORTRAN in the body of the text) on account of their very frequent everyday use. Of course it would be tedious if, every time it was apparent that someone had done a spot of programming in FORTRAN or ALGOL, some key-word such as FORT of ALGO kept appearing. It is, after all, not of primary importance to know whether Scott Fitzgerald typed his books or wrote them out in long-hand: it is more important to know what he actually said in them. On some occasions, however, the seemingly trivial can in fact be crucial. It is not, for instance, without significance that the sound synthesis programmes MUSIC IV, IVB and 360 are not FORTRAN based, but that MUSIC IV BF and V are.

The cut-off date for compilation was during the summer of 1975. The rapid progress being made in the area of the musical applications of computers means that, inevitably and understandably, a document such as this is already to some extent out of date. In case you are wondering, as I did for a long time, what 'Informatique' means, I can, with the aid of the *Grand Larousse de la langue française*, tell you that it derives from informat[ion] and [automat]ique and/or [electron]ique, and is defined as the 'science de traitement rationnel, notamment par machines automatiques, de l'information considérée comme le support des connaissances et des communications dans les domaines technique, économique et sociale'. The bibliography is in paper covers, consists of 172 xeroxed, typed sheets and contains 1485 entries.